

### 3. PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS

What evidence do you have of the program's effectiveness in increasing student achievement?

The Building Positive Leaders program was redesigned in 2002 in response to an increasingly abysmal outlook for Detroit student and research findings that low MEAP scores and poor school performance are indicators of future poverty. The Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development estimates that nationally, school dropouts result in \$260 billion in lifetime lost earnings and foregone tax revenues. In 1995, more than 40 percent of those in colleges with high minority enrollment, were required to take remedial courses in reading, writing, or math. (National Center for Education Statistics, 1997. *The Condition of Education 1997* (NCES 97-388), Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education.) Students who needed the most extensive remediation (more than two semesters of reading) were six times less likely to earn a BA than those who required no remedial work. Adelman, Clifford. 1999. *Answers in the Tool Box: Academic Intensity, Attendance Patterns, and Bachelor's Degree Attainment*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education.

As a long-term partner of Detroit Public Schools, and in anticipation of supporting our children, Alkebu-lan Village renewed its commitment to improving outcomes for African American families and determined that education is the most viable and accessible point for social change. Findings show that community based programming is ideal for supplemental educational services as the students in schools typically in greatest need are those less likely to seek school based solutions. Coordinators (of school based programs) indicated that their programs were less successful in recruiting students who are behind in school, poor attenders, prone toward detention, lacking support at home, and from... poor families. (*Challenges and Opportunities in After-School Programs: Lessons for Policymakers and Funders*, Public/Private Ventures, April 2001). Alkebu-lan has over twenty-five years of success in engaging and nurturing children and families who are the most difficult to reach. Our family-centered, culturally sensitive approach inspires trust, harmony and unity, which are often overlooked and underestimated in traditional educational settings.

In redesigning BPL, extensive research was conducted to identify research based and best practices in both school based and community based education. Alkebu-lan Village also explored promising programs for youth in out-of-home placements, adjudicated and who have been removed from traditional school based classrooms. After carefully identifying standards, benchmarks and desired outcomes for BPL students, educational solutions were identified to meet the needs of multiple age groups, that are self-paced, and conducive for use with individualized learning plans. The following data supports the BPL learning system:

#### Accelerated Reader

The purpose of AR is to help motivate students to read more books at an appropriate level of difficulty by using a point system tied to individual goals. AR seeks to motivate students to read advanced leveled books and to increase their personal reading time. "Given the strong empirical relationships between amount of time spent reading and reading growth, as well as significant theoretical support for the idea that practice in reading should lead to stronger reading ability, the goal of AR is consistent with what is currently known about factors that support strong reading growth." (*Renaissance Learning*)